



AMERICANS CONFRONT THE HOLOCAUST

**A Study of Reactions
to NBC-TV's Four-Part Drama
on The Nazi Era**

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INTRODUCTION

Holocaust, a dramatic serial televised nationwide by the National Broadcasting Company on four evenings in April 1978, stands as the mass media's most ambitious attempt so far to come to grips with the destruction of European Jewry under Hitler. In a broader sense, the NBC series, which was viewed by the second largest audience in American TV history, testifies to a fundamental change in the historic consciousness of Americans.

Until recently, Americans, by and large, took little interest in history, particularly that of other continents and cultures. Their struggle to build an ideal future in the New World drew their attention away from the Old. America seemed (and was) far away from the lands across the seas and the glories and miseries of the past.

This sense of America's separateness was finally dispelled by her global involvement in the Second World War, and by the intercontinental air travel and instantaneous worldwide communication that followed on the heels of that war. America's growth from a young to a middle-aged civilization during the same decades also increased popular awareness of the relevance of history.

That Americans today are ready to explore the past, even in its tragic and horrifying aspects, was illustrated by the success of Alex Haley's searing account of black slavery, Roots, both as a book and as a television dramatization. It was this broad acceptance of a grim aspect of American history that led the National Broadcasting Company to consider a similar drama documentary on the Nazi era.

There were, of course, both resemblances and differences between the two projects. Unlike Roots, the events depicted in Gerald Green's script, Holocaust, are recent; of those who survived Hitler's attempt to destroy European Jewry, many are still alive, as are many of the witnesses, including Americans who fought in Europe. Yet the basic facts about the Holocaust era--like the basic facts about black slavery--are totally unfamiliar to millions of Americans, particularly those born since the end of World War II.

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It is not surprising that when the preparation of Holocaust got under way, NBC turned to the American Jewish Committee for consultation and assistance--or that the AJC responded enthusiastically to this request. The Committee has long sought to foster public awareness and understanding of the Jewish catastrophe in Europe. Many of the earliest revelations about the Nazi death camps were printed in the AJC-sponsored Contemporary Jewish Record, in 1942 and 1943. Commentary magazine, the successor to the Record, was the first American publication to present Anne Frank's Diary of a Young Girl to the American readers in 1952. In 1954, AJC commissioned and published an English translation of Harvest of Hate, one of the earliest overviews of the Hitler period by Leon Poliakov, the widely acclaimed historian of the Holocaust. And the Committee has also published, and distributed in tens of thousands of copies, a large number of paperbacks, articles, fact sheets and other materials documenting the Holocaust experience.

Under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the AJC's William E. Wiener Oral History Library has recorded the recollections of some 250 Holocaust survivors and children of survivors living in the U.S. (These memoirs are scheduled for publication by the New American Library.) AJC chapters in several cities have worked to introduce Holocaust studies into the curriculums of public, junior and senior high schools; and the Committee has recently issued a set of Guidelines for Holocaust Teaching, in support of such programs.

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At NBC's request, soon after the original script for the TV series was completed, AJC's National Director of Interreligious Affairs, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, reviewed the script of the proposed TV series and offered numerous suggestions for revision. In addition, AJC prepared for NBC-TV a special Viewer's Guide for discussion in classrooms and other group settings after the programs were aired (see Appendix E). Hundreds of thousands of copies of this guide, written also to stand alone as a brief, well-documented text on Nazi anti-Semitism and its sources, and endorsed by the National Education Association, were distributed by NBC-TV to teachers, civic and church groups all over the U.S.

The Committee also joined with 12 other Jewish organizations in sponsoring a special kit for use in Jewish schools, synagogues and other formal and informal educational settings. Prepared under the auspices of the National Jewish Welfare Board, the kit included study guides for grade-school children, high-school youth and college students, as well as a family viewing guide and other reference materials.

AJC staff also advised the National Council of Churches, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the Evangelical churches in the preparation of separate Christian study guides in conjunction with the TV series. And in cooperation with NBC-TV, AJC arranged numerous previews for religious educators and leaders of labor, black and women's organizations, many of whom helped call the TV series to the attention of their contacts and members of their organizations.

In addition, AJC helped distribute video cassettes of the TV series, together with printed study guides, to Jewish communities abroad.

Besides helping to promote the Holocaust series themselves, AJC chapters in different parts of the U.S. planned related activities designed to increase knowledge and understanding about the Nazi era.

AJC's chapter in one city helped organize a conference on teaching about the Holocaust; another created a Holocaust exhibit at a college library; and still another conducted a high-school essay contest on the moral lessons of the Holocaust. Several chapters monitored phone calls made by viewers to the local NBC stations during the broadcasts or devised other tests of their series' impact. A number of chapters supplied local news media with background materials interpreting the Holocaust, arranged press interviews with survivors living in the area, and helped plan interreligious commemorative services for the Holocaust victims. A special exhibition, "Spiritual Resistance: Art from Concentration Camps, 1940-1945," was brought to the U.S. from Israel through the generosity of AJC members Melvin and Elaine Merians, and displayed at leading museums around the country by arrangement with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

Predictably, the Holocaust series evoked objections as well as praise. Some critics took issue with the script, the quality of the production and other aspects of the series; others insisted it was not possible to depict the horrors of Buchenwald, Auschwitz and the whole Nazi experience in a fictionalized TV drama, particularly one interrupted repeatedly by commercials. Nevertheless, the broadcasts gave that grim period of Jewish and world history the widest exposure in the U.S. that it has ever received in any medium. For this reason, among others, the American Jewish Committee felt it was important to learn how the programs were accepted by the viewing public.

One measure was the mail and phone calls that poured into NBC-TV in the wake of the broadcast. The network was kind enough to permit an AJC research analyst to examine these responses, and they are summarized in Appendix D.

But even before the programs were aired, the Committee made plans to probe the reactions of viewers to the Holocaust series, and its impact on viewers' knowledge and attitudes concerning Jews and the Nazi era. A number of generous contributions by men and women who agreed that such research was important made it possible to arrange for an in-depth telephone survey addressing itself to that issue.

What that survey revealed is the subject of the pages that follow.

THE SURVEY FINDINGS

The Respondents

Holocaust, a four-part television drama, was presented by the National Broadcasting Company television network on the evenings of April 16 through April 19, 1978. The 9 1/2-hour drama tells the story of a Jewish physician and his family, all of whom are affected in different ways by the Nazi mass murder program. Paralleling the tragedy of this family is the story of an ambitious young German lawyer who joins the SS (Schutzstaffel--Hitler's so-called "protective guard") and helps plan the murder of the Jews.

The audience reaction to the series was explored about three weeks later through a telephone survey conducted by Response Analysis, a polling firm based in Princeton, New Jersey, for the American Jewish Committee. The questionnaire, designed by Response Analysis and the AJC, sought to measure the impact of Holocaust on viewers, gauge the general public's awareness of events during the Nazi period, and assess American attitudes toward the victims of the Nazis, as well as toward present-day Jews and Israel.

From May 5 through May 9, a representative sample of Americans in different localities was interviewed by telephone. The 822 respondents included 411 who had seen Holocaust and, for comparison, 411 who had not. The interview questions used for viewers and nonviewers appear in Appendices A and B.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents, such as region, education and income, are shown in Appendix C. The figures and percentages have been weighted according to U.S. Census data for age, sex, education, and region.

Viewers and nonviewers did not differ materially in age, sex, region. The viewers tended to have somewhat higher incomes and more education; the nonviewers described themselves slightly more often as politically conservative. The two groups differed most noticeably in terms of religion and race. Among the viewers, Jews were overrepresented (5.4 percent, or twice their 2.7 percent ratio in the U.S. population), while blacks were underrepresented (3 percent as against a population ratio of 11.5 percent).

Impact of Program

When asked about the main ideas or impressions which the Holocaust program had left with them, a majority of viewers in one way or another expressed horror at the Nazis' cruelty and its senselessness. Almost a fifth said the series had impressed them as a "never again" lesson (Table 1).

One of the crucial questions was: "Would you say that watching the Holocaust program made you understand any better what Hitler's treatment of the Jews was all about...?" Overall, 60 percent of the viewers said yes; more than a third said

TABLE 1

Asked of viewers (Q. 8): *"What are the main ideas or impressions that the Holocaust program left with you?"*

Multiple responses.

	<u>Percent of viewers</u>
Horror, Senselessness	27
Learned lesson--don't let it happen again	19
Sympathy with victims	11
Hard to understand how something like this could happen	10
Upset by violence, brutality	7
Believe it to be history of what took place	7
Negative feelings about Nazis	6
Wonder why Jews didn't fight back	4
Technical or historical criticism ("watered down," "inaccurate")	3
Shocked by indifference of other nations	2
More appreciative of our freedoms, democracy, way of life	2
No answer	11

no. Among Jews the percentages were reversed, with 55 percent saying no and 39 percent yes. The effect was greatest among the young: 71 percent of viewers between 18 and 29 answered yes (Table 2).

Three-quarters of those who had seen the series thought it gave an accurate picture of how the Nazis had treated the Jews, 15 percent were not sure or had no opinion, and only 10 percent thought it inaccurate (Table 3).

The answers thus far suggest, as would be expected, that many of those who chose to watch Holocaust already had strong feelings about the Nazis and about their victims. This is con-

TABLE 2

Asked of viewers (Q. 16): "Would you say that watching the Holocaust program made you understand any better what Hitler's treatment of Jews was all about, or didn't the program add anything to what you already understood about this?"

	Percent of viewers		
	"Understood better"	"Didn't add anything"	Not sure or don't know
All viewers	60	36	4
By age:			
18-29	71	28	1
30-49	58	36	6
50 or more	49	47	4
By education:			
High school or less	63	33	4
Some college or technical school	67	30	3
College graduates	44	55	1
By religious preference:			
Protestant	65	32	3
Catholic	63	33	5*
Jewish	39	55	6

* Apparent total 101 percent. In this and subsequent tables, apparent one-percent deviations from 100-percent totals are due to rounding.

firmed by the finding that only 29 percent of the viewers said their feelings about the Nazis had been affected in one way or another by the program (Table 4). Of this group, 91 percent said it had strengthened or revealed anti-Nazi feelings (or pro-Jewish ones, though the question did not ask about these), and 5

TABLE 3

Asked of viewers (Q. 17): *"Do you think the Holocaust program gave an accurate picture of the Nazis' treatment of the Jews or do you think it gave an inaccurate picture of this?"*

	Percent of viewers		
	<u>"Accurate"</u>	<u>"Inaccurate"</u>	<u>Not sure or no opinion</u>
All viewers	75	10	15
By age:			
18-29	77	9	14
30-49	76	9	15
50 or more	71	11	18
By education:			
High school or less	75	9	16
Some college or technical school	81	6	13
College graduates	76	12	12

TABLE 4

Asked of viewers (Q. 21): *"Were your feelings about the Nazis affected in any way as a result of watching Holocaust?"*

	Percent of viewers		
	<u>"Yes"</u>	<u>"No"</u>	<u>Not sure or no opinion</u>
All viewers	29	62	9
By age:			
18-29	37	53	10
30-49	30	65	5
50 or more	21	66	13

percent reported pro-Nazi (or anti-Jewish) feelings. Of 62 percent who said their feelings about the Nazis had not been affected, 7 percent (4 percent of all viewers) said they had been pro-Nazi (or anti-Jewish) to begin with (Table 5).

Was presenting a program such as Holocaust on television considered a good idea? More than two-thirds of all those interviewed (83 percent of viewers and 56 percent of nonviewers) thought it was; among those under 29, as many as 78 percent did (Table 6). When asked why, 83 percent of those who favored the idea said it could make people aware of what might happen. Of those who did not think the broadcast a good idea, one-half simply said the past could not be changed; most of the rest objected to violence on TV or thought the film might put dangerous ideas in people's heads (Table 7).

Should children be taught about the Holocaust era? Of those who had seen the series, 71 percent said it was a good

TABLE 5

Asked of viewers (Q. 22A) who say (Table 4) their feelings about Nazis were affected by watching Holocaust: "In what ways were your feelings affected?"

Asked of viewers (Q. 22B) who say (Table 4) their feelings about Nazis were not affected: "Why do you say that?"

Percent of viewers reporting

	Feelings affected (strengthened or revealed)	Feelings not affected
Anti-Nazi (or pro-Jewish*) feelings	91	47
Pro-Nazi (or anti-Jewish*) feelings	5	7
Indeterminate (no "pro" or "anti" specified)	2	32
Other	1	7
Don't know or no answer	1	7

* Feelings about Jews volunteered, though question was about Nazis.

TABLE 6

Asked of viewers (Q. 10): "(Just to remind you / As you said), Holocaust was about how the Nazis in Germany persecuted and killed the Jews of Europe. Some people say it's a good idea to have programs like Holocaust which remind Americans of what happened under Hitler, other people say programs like this are not a good idea.

"How do you personally feel--do you think a program like Holocaust is a good idea or not a good idea to show on TV?"

Asked of nonviewers (Q. 7): "(Let me tell you that / As you mentioned earlier,) the program, Holocaust, was...[etc. as above]."

	Percent		
	"Good idea"	"Not a good idea"	Not sure or no opinion
All respondents	68	18	14
Viewers	83	9	8
Nonviewers	56	24	20
By age:			
18-29	78	11	11
30-44	68	20	12
45-59	67	16	17
60 or more	55	26	19
By religious preference:			
Protestant	64	20	16
Catholic	73	16	11
Jewish	100	0	0
By family composition:			
Children under 18 in family	74	14	12
None under 18	64	20	16
By sex:			
Female	63	21	16
Male	73	14	13

idea, as did 65 percent of all respondents. College-educated persons, political liberals and parents of children under 18 most often approved (Table 8). When those who favored teaching about the Holocaust were asked who should do it, with multiple choices permitted, over three-fourths chose the schools; almost one-half chose the home. Viewers and nonviewers essentially agreed in their responses to this question (Table 9).

Awareness

Even in the years right after the Second World War, many Americans were only vaguely aware of the actual events in Europe and the vast destruction wrought by nazism.¹ What could be expected in 1978?

TABLE 7

Asked of viewers (Q. 11) and nonviewers (Q. 8): "I'd appreciate it if you could tell me why you feel this way about it [televising Holocaust]."

	Percent		
	All respondents	Viewers	Nonviewers
<u>Why a good idea:</u>			
To make people aware of what could happen	83	84	81
To teach children	8	10	6
To foster greater appreciation of our way of life	1	2	1
General approval	5	3	8
Other	1	*	1
No opinion	2	1	3
<u>Why a poor idea:</u>			
Can't change the past	49	46	49
Too much violence on TV now	17	11	19
Might put ideas in people's heads	13	16	12
Bad for children to see this violence	11	20	9
Other	9	7	9
No opinion	1	0	2

* Less than 1/2 of 1 percent.

1. Charles Herbert Stember and others, Jews in the Mind of America (New York: Basic Books, 1966), pp. 136-155.

TABLE 8

Asked of viewers (Q. 12) and nonviewers (Q.9): "Do you think it is a good idea to teach children about things like what the Nazis did, or do you think this is not a good idea?"

	Percent		
	"Good idea"	"Not a good idea"	Not sure or no opinion
All respondents	65	20	15
Viewers	71	14	15
Nonviewers	60	25	15
By education:			
High school or less	62	23	15
Some college or technical school	72	14	14
College graduates	77	11	12
By family composition:			
Children under 18 in family	71	17	12
None under 18	60	22	18
By sex:			
Female	62	21	17
Male	68	19	13
Politics:			
Liberal	80	12	8
Conservative	70	18	12

Viewers were asked: "How well informed would you say you were about Hitler's treatment of the Jews before you watched the Holocaust program...?", and nonviewers were asked the same without reference to the program. People under 30 were found to know less about the period than those in their 40s and 50s. Among viewers aged 29 or younger, 30 percent described themselves as poorly informed; among nonviewers in the same age group, 46 percent did. Analogous differences were found in other age groups (Table 10). Obviously, the nonviewer category contained more people who simply were not interested in the subject and felt no desire to know more about it.

Fully one-quarter of all respondents said they did not know whether people other than Jews had been treated by the Nazis in

TABLE 9

Asked of viewers (Q. 14) and nonviewers (Q. 11) who say (Table 8) it is a good idea to teach about "things like what the Nazis did": "Where do you believe children should be taught about things like this?"

Multiple responses.

	Percent		
	All respondents	Viewers	Nonviewers
School	76	76	76
Home	46	52	40
Television	10	12	7
Church or synagogue	8	8	8
Other	3	4	3
Not sure or no opinion	4	3	4

TABLE 10

Asked of viewers (Q. 15): "How well informed would you say you were about Hitler's treatment of the Jews before you watched the Holocaust program--very well informed, fairly well informed, not very well informed, or poorly informed?"

Asked of nonviewers (Q. 12): "How well informed would you say you are about Hitler's treatment of the Jews--very well informed...[etc. as above]."

	Percent			
	"Well informed"	"Fairly well"	"Not very" or "poorly"	No opinion
Viewers	35	44	20	1
By age:				
18-29	20	49	30	1
30-49	41	44	15	0
50 or more	46	39	13	2
Nonviewers	19	43	37	1
By age:				
18-29	12	42	46	0
30-49	19	46	34	1
50 or more	24	44	31	1

the same way, and as many as a third thought none had been (Table 11).

Thus, it seems evident that whatever history young Americans have learned, it includes little about nazism.

Do Americans think most Germans knew what the Nazis were doing? Respondents were divided almost equally: 44 percent said most Germans knew a lot or at least something, 42 percent said they knew little or nothing (Table 12). Of the Jewish respondents, 58 percent thought the Germans knew.

"Do you think there are any countries or governments in the world today that are similar to Nazi Germany?" Almost half (46 percent) of all respondents said yes, while 27 percent said no and another 27 percent were not sure (Table 13). When those who had said yes were asked to identify the countries or governments they had in mind, 56 percent mentioned Communist countries,

TABLE 11

Asked of viewers (Q. 19) and nonviewers (Q. 13): "As far as you know, did the Nazis treat other people the same way they treated the Jews?"

	Percent		
	"Yes"	"No"	Not sure or no opinion
All respondents	42	33	25
Viewers	46	34	20
Nonviewers	40	32	28
By age:			
18-29	37	35	28
30-44	48	34	18
45-59	50	30	20
60 or more	37	32	31
By education:			
High school or less	38	33	29
Some college or technical school	48	32	20
College graduates	59	33	8

TABLE 12

Asked of viewers (Q. 27) and nonviewers (Q. 17): "To what extent do you think most Germans knew what the Nazis were doing to Jews and other people they were persecuting? Would you say most Germans knew a lot about this, they knew something about this, or they knew little or nothing about it?"

	Percent			
	All respondents	Viewers	Nonviewers	Jewish respondents
Germans knew a lot	14) 44	14) 48	14) 42	31) 58
Germans knew something	30)	34)	28)	27)
Germans knew little or nothing	42	44	40	31
Not sure or no opinion	14	8	18	11

TABLE 13

Asked of viewers (Q. 31) and nonviewers (Q. 21): "Do you think there are any countries or governments in the world today that are similar to Nazi Germany?"

	Percent		
	"Yes"	"No"	Not sure or no opinion
All respondents	46	27	27
Viewers	53	25	22
Nonviewers	41	28	31
By age:			
18-29	46	33	21
30-44	53	25	22
45-49	48	22	30
50 or more	35	26	39
By education:			
High school or less	39	30	31
Some college or technical school	60	20	20
College graduates	66	21	13

17 percent Uganda, and 15 percent other Third World nations. Some respondents named several countries; 16 percent did not specify any (Table 14).

Attitudes toward Jews

Questions were asked both to determine how the Jewish victims of the Holocaust were perceived, and to discover whether significant anti-Semitic bias still existed in America. On the whole, the viewers were sympathetic to the Jews; if a majority of them (55 percent) said their feelings had not been affected by the program, the reason in all but a few cases seemed to be that they were sympathetic in the first place (Tables 15, 16).

TABLE 14

Asked of viewers (Q. 32) and nonviewers (Q. 22) who say (Table 13) there are countries similar to Nazi Germany: *"Which countries or governments are similar to Nazi Germany?"*

Multiple responses.

	Percent		
	<u>All respondents</u>	<u>Viewers</u>	<u>Nonviewers</u>
Communist countries	56	60	52
Uganda	17	19	15
Other (Africa, Philippines)	15	18	12
Latin America	6	6	5
South Africa	5	6	4
Western democracies	4	3	4
Arab countries	3	4	2
U. S. A.	1	1	1
Israel	1	0	2
Don't know	16	9	23

TABLE 15

Asked of viewers (Q. 23): "Were your feelings about Jews affected in any way as a result of watching Holocaust?"

	Percent of viewers		
	"Yes"	"No"	Not sure or no opinion
All viewers	39	55	6
By age:			
18-29	42	51	7
30-49	41	55	4
50 or more	32	60	8

TABLE 16

Asked of viewers (Q.24A) who say (Table 15) their feelings about Jews were affected by watching Holocaust: "In what ways were your feelings affected?"

Asked of viewers (Q. 24B) who say (Table 15) their feelings about Jews were not affected: "Why do you say that?"

	Percent of viewers reporting	
	Feelings affected (strengthened or revealed)	Feelings not affected
Pro-Jewish (or anti-Nazi*) feelings	92	59
Anti-Jewish (or pro-Nazi*) feelings	4	9
Indeterminate (no "pro" or "anti" specified)	1	24
Other	1	3
Don't know or no answer	2	5

* Feelings about Nazis volunteered, though question was about Jews.

Holocaust stressed the failure of some German Jews, as exemplified by the physician and his wife, to act in the face of the ominous German reality. The survey asked: "...Do you think the persecution of the Jews was...their own fault?" (Table 17). The response was inconclusive, possibly because the question itself proved ambiguous.

Some respondents took "fault" to mean failure of perception or nerve. In the words of one respondent: "At first [Jews] didn't understand what was going on; they should have fought back but didn't." But others interpreted "fault" as moral guilt. Thus, one respondent led off with an old anti-Semitic stereotype: "They [Jews] had the businesses and controlled everything, so Hitler took from the haves and gave to the have-nots." The same respondent continued: "Because they have gone through centuries of persecution, they [Jews] feel that they are martyrs--that's why they just sat back and let Hitler do this."

Contrary to what might have been expected, viewers were somewhat more inclined than nonviewers (25 percent as against 17 percent) to put the blame for what happened primarily on the Jews (Table 17). Moreover, of those viewers who faulted the Jews, 47 percent said they did not fight hard enough, whereas only 22 percent of the nonviewers took this position (Table 18).

TABLE 17

Asked of viewers (Q. 25) and nonviewers (Q. 15): "Thinking back to the treatment of the Jews by Nazi Germany before and during World War II, do you think the persecution of the Jews was mostly their own fault, partly their own fault, or not at all their own fault?"

	Percent		
	"Mostly" or "partly their fault"	"Not at all their fault"	No opinion or no answer
All respondents	20	57	23
Viewers	25	61	15
Nonviewers	17	55	28
<u>By education:</u>			
High school or less			
Viewers	24	60	16
Nonviewers	17	51	32
Some college or technical school			
Viewers	29	57	14
Nonviewers	18	66	17
College graduates			
Viewers	23	67	10
Nonviewers	18	68	14

At every educational level, many more viewers than nonviewers reacted negatively to what was seen as Jewish passivity.

Three questions explored attitudes toward Jews in the United States:

1. "Some people believe that Jews have too much power in this country. Do you tend to agree or disagree...?" Of the viewers, 12 percent said they agreed and 20 percent were not sure or had no opinion; among the nonviewers, somewhat over 13 percent agreed and somewhat over 26 percent had no opinion--nearly 8 percent more, in the aggregate, than among the viewers (Table 19). This finding seems to agree with other indications (e.g. Table 10 above, Tables 21-23 below) that the nonviewers included more people who are uncaring or uneasy about Jews and their concerns.²

TABLE 18

Asked of viewers (Q. 26) and nonviewers (Q. 16) who say (Table 17) the persecution was mostly or partly the Jews' own fault: *"Could you tell me why you feel this way?"*

Multiple responses.

	Percent		
	<u>All respondents</u>	<u>Viewers</u>	<u>Nonviewers</u>
Jews didn't rebel, fight hard enough	35	47	22
Jews were seen by Germans as too powerful, with too much economic control	22	23	21
There must have been a reason for the persecution	14	9	19
Jews are different, have own community	13	10	15
Jews should have fled	7	7	7
Other answers	4	3	6
Don't know or no answer	10	8	13

2. In January 1975 the Yankelovich, Skelly and White polling organization asked Americans to select from among nine groups those they thought had too much power. Oil companies, big business and organized labor were mentioned most often; Jews, named by 37 percent of the respondents, were in sixth place. In a repeat poll in 1976, they dropped to seventh place, named by 26 percent; nevertheless, it is evident that a fairly substantial number of Americans cling to the notion of excessive Jewish power.

TABLE 19

Asked of viewers (Q. 29) and nonviewers (Q. 19): "Some people believe that Jews have too much power in this country. Do you tend to agree or disagree with this point of view?"

	Percent		
	"Yes"	"No"	Not sure or no opinion
All respondents	13	63	24
Viewers	12	68	20
Nonviewers	13	60	26

2. Did the respondents believe most people in the United States, many, few, or none at all would "think it was all right to persecute Jews here?" (Table 20). Only 4 percent thought that many or most Americans would approve such persecution; 53 percent thought a few might, 30 percent said no one would, and 12 percent had no opinion. More nonviewers than viewers (34 percent to 26) believed no one at all in the U.S. would approve persecution of Jews; conversely, more viewers than nonviewers (58 percent to 50) thought only a few people would do so.

3. "Most American Jews strongly support the State of Israel. Does this make good sense to you, some sense, or not much sense?" Almost half of all respondents (44 percent) thought it made good sense, and over a quarter (29 percent) thought it made at least some sense. Viewers seemed somewhat more sympathetic than nonviewers to the Jewish position, with 52 percent saying "good sense," and 28 percent "some sense" (Table 21). The replies were visibly differentiated by race: Fewer blacks than whites were undecided on the issue (9 percent, as against 16), slightly fewer blacks replied that Jewish support for Israel made either "good sense" or "some sense" (71 percent as against 74), and twice as many (20 percent as against 10) thought it didn't make much sense.

Attitudes toward Israel

"Thinking about the current situation in the Middle East, would you say your sympathies lean more toward the Arabs than the Israelis, more toward the Israelis than the Arabs, or would

TABLE 20

Asked of viewers (Q. 30) and nonviewers (Q. 20): "How about the question of persecuting Jews in the United States? Do you think that most people in the United States, a large number but not most people, only a small number of people, or that nobody would think it was all right to persecute Jews here?"

	Percent			
	"Most or "a large number"	"A small number"	"Nobody"	Not sure or no opinion
All respondents	4	53	31	12
Viewers	4	58	26	12
Nonviewers	3	50	34	13

TABLE 21

Asked of viewers (Q. 35) and nonviewers (Q. 25): "Most American Jews strongly support the State of Israel. Does this make good sense to you, some sense, or not much sense?"

	Percent			
	"Makes good sense"	"Makes some sense"	"Does not make much sense"	Not sure or no opinion
All respondents	44	29	11	16
Viewers	52	28	8	12
Nonviewers	39	29	13	19
<u>By education:</u>				
High school or less	41	28	13	18
Some college or technical school	52	32	7	9
College graduates	54	31	5	10
<u>By religious preference:</u>				
Protestant	45	27	11	17
Catholic	41	34	12	13
Jewish	80	15	0	5
<u>By race:</u>				
White	45	29	10	16
Black	47	24	20	9

TABLE 22

Asked of viewers (Q. 33) and nonviewers (Q. 23): "Thinking about the current situation in the Middle East, would you say your sympathies lean more toward the Arabs than the Israelis, more toward the Israelis than the Arabs, or would you say you take a completely neutral view of the situation in the Middle East?"

	Percent			
	"Sympathize more with "Israelis"	Arabs"	"Completely neutral"	No opinion
All respondents	19	2	61	18
Viewers	25	3	57	15
Nonviewers	14	2	63	21
<u>By education:</u>				
High school or less	13	2	63	22
Some college or technical school	28	3	58	11
College graduates	37	3	52	8
<u>By religious preference:</u>				
Protestant	18	2	60	20
Catholic	15	3	67	15
Jewish	74	0	26	0
<u>By race:</u>				
White	20	2	60	18
Black	6	5	69	20

you say you take a completely neutral view of the situation in the Middle East?" (Table 22).

Here the answer was surprising. For three decades, opinion polls found strong support for Israel, and neutrality made a modest showing in recent years;³ but judging by the present study, neutrality has now become the dominant attitude. No fewer than three-fifths of viewers (61 percent) said they were neutral. Slightly fewer than one-fifth (19 percent) favored Israel, 18 percent had no opinion, and 2 percent favored the Arabs. Nonviewers chose the neutral response more often than viewers (63

3. In January 1976 the Yankelovich organization asked: "If war should break out in the Middle East, with whom would you identify most?" Fifty-five percent said with Israel; 9 percent with the Arabs; 17 percent with neither. A Gallup poll at the end of April 1978 reported 44 percent for Israel; 10 percent for Arabs; 33 percent for neither; and 13 percent no opinion.

percent to 57), and were less often sympathetic to Israel (14 percent to 25). Among black respondents, 69 percent were neutral, 6 favored Israel and 5 favored the Arabs. Even among the Jewish respondents, 26 percent said they were neutral.

"Because of what happened to the Jews in Europe during World War II, Jews in Israel today believe that they cannot really depend on others to protect them. Do you think this is a sensible attitude...or are they mistaken...?" One would expect viewers to relate this question to one of the main lessons of the film, stressed by both Nazis and Jews: that no one helped the Jews except Jews themselves. (In Holocaust, the young hero joins a group of Zionist partisans who harass the Nazis and rescue Jews; later he leads a group of orphans to safe haven in Palestine.) Against this background, the question would seem almost to invite support for the Israelis' view. Yet only 33 percent of all respondents thought Israel's refusal to depend on the protection of others made sense; fully 45 percent thought the Israelis were mistaken, and 22 percent had no opinion. Nonviewers more often had no opinion than did viewers, and less often agreed with the Israelis' attitude (Table 23).

We can only speculate as to the reasons. Possibly, the respondents who disagreed felt that the Israelis were not showing enough trust in the United States as their ally, or did not want to be understood as approving Israel's alleged "intransigence" or "inflexibility."

TABLE 23

Asked of viewers (Q. 34) and nonviewers (Q. 24): "Because of what happened to the Jews in Europe during World War II, Jews in Israel today believe that they cannot really depend on others to protect them. Do you think this is a sensible attitude for Jews in Israel to have or are they mistaken in thinking that they cannot really depend on others to protect them?"

	Percent		
	"Sensible"	"Mistaken"	No opinion or no answer
All Respondents	33	45	22
Viewers	36	46	18
Nonviewers	30	44	26
By education:			
High school graduates	27	49	24
Some college	40	44	16
College graduates	52	32	16

Reasons For Watching Or Not Watching

How many of the nonviewers deliberately chose not to watch Holocaust, and why? Almost a third of the respondents indicated they had intentionally passed up the program--some because they were not interested, some because they did not like to see violence, others because they thought it would be too sad or depressing, and still others because they did not want to be reminded of the Holocaust era. But 45 percent said they had been unable to watch, meaning simply they were not near a television set at the time (Table 24). In this connection, it should be noted that over half of those who did not watch thought it a good idea to have such a program (see Table 6).

Of those who did watch Holocaust, one-half had been attracted by the advance publicity for a TV spectacular, were curious how TV would handle it, or simply thought it sounded interesting.

TABLE 24

Asked of nonviewers (Q. 5): *"Can you recall why you didn't watch the Holocaust program or only watched a little of it?"*

Asked of viewers who watched irregularly (Q. 2): *"Why didn't you watch Holocaust on all of the nights the program was shown?"*

Multiple responses.

	Percent	
	Nonviewers	Irregular viewers
Unable to	45	63
Don't watch much TV	14	3
Not interested	10	7
Too sad or depressing	9	5
Don't like violence	9	3
Watched another program	8	7
Didn't know it was on	6	7
Don't like serial programs	6	0
Didn't want to be reminded of Holocaust	4	1
No answer	1	9

One-third, however, said they had wanted to know more about the history of the era, and 14 percent said it was in some way related to their lives (Table 25).

TABLE 25

Asked of viewers (Q. 4): *"What made you decide to watch the Holocaust program in the first place?"*

Multiple responses.

	All ages	Percent of viewers		
		Aged		
		18-29	30-49	50 or over
To become better informed about the history of the era	33	37	39	23
Publicity in media	22	13	28	25
It sounded interesting (nonspecific)	18	19	15	20
Directly related to respondent's life, religion or era	14	10	9	24
Just tuned in	9	10	8	9
To see how they would do it on TV	8	8	8	9
Informal communications	8	12	10	2
Because someone else wanted to watch	5	7	5	2

TABLE 26

Asked of viewers (Q. 9): *"Did you find any parts of the Holocaust program difficult or disturbing to watch or did you find yourself taking the program pretty much in stride?"*

Percent of viewers

	<u>"Difficult or disturbing"</u>	<u>"Took in stride"</u>	<u>No opinion or no answer</u>
All viewers	46	51	3
By sex:			
Female	57	41	2
Male	35	62	3

Taken all in all, what reactions were evoked by bringing the experience of the Holocaust to the TV screen? On the whole, the Holocaust series made a vast audience more aware of, and perhaps more sensitive to, a catastrophe almost beyond comprehension.

Half the people who had seen one or more episodes of Holocaust said they had found it possible to "take the program pretty much in stride"; but nearly all of the other half had found it "difficult or disturbing to watch" (Table 26). Furthermore, as noted earlier, majorities of both viewers and non-viewers approved the presentation of the program. Many respondents expressed the hope that if people knew of such things, they would not let them happen again, and a substantial majority wanted the schools to teach about the Holocaust.

Although the dramatization struck most viewers as historically accurate, there are indications that, despite the scenes dealing with the Resistance, it made the victims of nazism seem totally unresisting and without spirit. This may explain why viewers were far more likely than nonviewers to lay some of the blame on the victims for not fighting back.

Finally, it should be noted that the audience for Holocaust was even more self-selected than are TV audiences in general. A large number of Americans do not watch such programs, or when they see them tune out the intended message.

Persons who were interested in the subject in the first place, who know something about nazism or were sympathetic to its victims, were strongly represented among the viewers, while a sizeable proportion of nonviewers (in the neighborhood of 40 percent) were ignorant of recent European history, indifferent to the possibility of future catastrophes similar to the Holocaust, and/or apathetic about events not immediate to them in time or place. (Even among viewers, 29 percent said they did not believe, or were not sure, children should be taught about the Nazi period.)

In general, the findings provide reason for both satisfaction and concern. For while they confirm that most Americans condemn racism and nazism, they also indicate that a hard core of racists and anti-Semites remains in the United States, and that a good many Americans, without being anti-Semitic, feel themselves quite remote from Jews and their concerns.

QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN SURVEYING VIEWERS

I'd like to ask you a few more questions about how much of the television program Holocaust you watched. After that, I'll ask you for your reactions to the program.

1. On how many of the nights Holocaust was shown did you watch any part of it? Did you watch any of it on Sunday, the first night it was shown? Any on Monday, the second night? Any on Tuesday, the third night? Any on Wednesday, the fourth night?
2. (If respondent did not watch on all four nights:) Why didn't you watch Holocaust on all of the nights the program was shown?
3. Would you please tell me about how much of Holocaust you watched each time? On the first (second, third, fourth) night watched, did you watch all of it, about three-quarters of it, half of it, about a quarter of it, or less than a quarter of it?
4. What made you decide to watch the Holocaust program in the first place? ...What other reasons did you have for tuning in?
5. Before you watched Holocaust for the first time, did you read or hear anything about it, or did you just happen to tune in?
6. (If "read or heard about it":) Where did you first read or hear about the Holocaust program? (No predetermined categories; multiple answers permitted.)
7. In a few words, can you tell me what the program was about?
8. What are the main ideas or impressions that the Holocaust program left with you?...Anything else?
9. Did you find any parts of the Holocaust program difficult or disturbing to watch or did you find yourself taking the program pretty much in stride?
10. (Just to remind you/As you said), Holocaust was about how the Nazis in Germany persecuted and killed the Jews of Europe. Some people say it's a good idea to have programs like Holocaust which remind Americans of what happened under Hitler, other people say programs like this are not a good idea.

How do you personally feel--do you think a program like Holocaust is a good idea or not a good idea to show on TV?

11. I'd appreciate it if you could tell me why you feel this way about it.

APPENDIX A (continued)

12. Do you think it is a good idea to teach children about things like what the Nazis did, or do you think this is not a good idea?
13. Why do you say that?
14. (If "good idea" in Q. 12:) Where do you believe children should be taught about things like this? (No predetermined categories; multiple answers permitted.)
15. How well informed would you say you were about Hitler's treatment of the Jews before you watched the Holocaust program--very well informed, fairly well informed, not very well informed, or poorly informed?
16. Would you say that watching the Holocaust program made you understand any better what Hitler's treatment of the Jews was all about, or didn't the program add anything to what you already understood about this?
17. Do you think the Holocaust program gave an accurate picture of the Nazis' treatment of the Jews or do you think it gave an inaccurate picture of this?
18. (If "inaccurate":) In what ways did you think the program was inaccurate?
19. As far as you know, did the Nazis treat other people the same way they treated the Jews?
20. (If "yes":) Can you name some other people that the Nazis persecuted like they did the Jews?
21. Were your feelings about the Nazis affected in any way as a result of watching Holocaust?
- 22a. (If "yes":) In what ways were your feelings affected?
- 22b. (If "no" or "not sure":) Why do you say that?
23. Were your feelings about Jews affected in any way as a result of watching Holocaust?
- 24a. (If "yes":) In what ways were your feelings affected?
- 24b. (If "no" or "not sure":) Why do you say that?
25. Thinking back to the treatment of the Jews by Nazi Germany before and during World War II, do you think the persecution of the Jews was mostly their own fault, partly their own fault, or not at all their own fault?
26. Could you tell me why you feel this way?
27. To what extent do you think most Germans knew what the Nazis were doing to Jews and other people they were persecuting? Would you say most

APPENDIX A (continued)

Germans knew a lot about this, they knew something about this, or they knew little or nothing about it?

- 28a. (If "a lot" or "something":) As far as you know, what did most Germans do about this situation? Do you think most Germans did a lot, did something, or did little or nothing about this situation in which Nazis were persecuting Jews and others?
- 28b. (If "a lot" or "something" continued:) Do you think most Germans could have done more than they did about this situation?
- 28c. (If "yes":) What could they have done?
29. Some people believe that Jews have too much power in this country. Do you tend to agree or disagree with this point of view?
30. How about the question of persecuting Jews in the United States? Do you think that most people in the United States, a large number but not most people, only a small number of people, or that nobody would think it was all right to persecute Jews here?
31. Do you think there are any countries or governments in the world today that are similar to Nazi Germany?
32. (If "yes":) Which countries or governments are similar to Nazi Germany?

Now a few questions about the Middle East and Israel.

33. Thinking about the current situation in the Middle East, would you say your sympathies lean more toward the Arabs than the Israelis, more toward the Israelis than the Arabs, or would you say you take a completely neutral view of the situation in the Middle East?
34. Because of what happened to the Jews in Europe during World War II, Jews in Israel today believe that they cannot really depend on others to protect them. Do you think this is a sensible attitude for Jews in Israel to have or are they mistaken in thinking that they cannot really depend on others to protect them?
35. Most Americans strongly support the State of Israel. Does this make good sense to you, some sense, or not much sense?
36. Did anyone else in your household watch the Holocaust program?
37. (If "yes":) Who else in your household watched Holocaust? (In terms of relationship to respondent; no predetermined categories; multiple answers permitted.)

Finally, a few background questions.

38. Do you have poor reception on any of the channels for the three main

APPENDIX A (continued)

networks--ABC, CBS, NBC? (Multiple answers permitted.)

39. Would you mind telling me your age?
40. What is the highest grade you completed in school?
41. When it comes to issues of national concern, do you find yourself usually leaning more to the liberal point of view, or more to the conservative point of view?
42. What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion?
43. (If religious preference is given:) How many times a month do you usually attend religious services? (No predetermined categories.)
44. We would like to know what race you belong to. That is, are you white, black, or a member of some other race?
45. How many people--children and adults--are there living in your household, including yourself?
46. Are there any children under 18 living in your household now?
47. (If "yes":) Are there any children ages 6-12 in your household?
48. (If "yes":) Are there any children under age 6 in your household?
49. And finally, we'd like to get some idea of your family income, but not a precise figure. Is your total family income less than \$15,000 a year or \$15,000 or more?
50. (If "less than \$15,000":) Is it less than \$10,000 or between \$10,000 and \$15,000?
51. (If \$15,000 or more":) Is it between \$15,000 and \$20,000 or more than \$20,000?
52. In what state do you live?

Thank you very much for your time.

QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN SURVEYING NONVIEWERS

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about the TV program, Holocaust.

1. Do you have any idea what the program Holocaust was all about?
2. (If "yes":) Would you tell me what the program was about, as you understand it?
3. (If "yes" in Q.1:) Can you remember when you learned what you know about the program--before it was shown on television, during the time it was on television, or after it was on television? (Multiple answers recorded.)
4. (If "yes" in Q.1:) How did you learn what you know about this program? (No predetermined categories; multiple answers permitted.)
5. Can you recall why you didn't watch the Holocaust program or only watched a little of it?...Any other reasons? (At least three different, complete answers sought.)
6. (Not asked.)
7. (Let me tell you that/As you mentioned earlier) the program, Holocaust, was about how the Nazis in Germany persecuted and killed the Jews of Europe. Some people say it's a good idea to have programs like Holocaust which remind Americans of what happened under Hitler, other people say programs like this are not a good idea.

How do you personally feel--do you think a program like Holocaust is a good idea or not a good idea to show on TV?

8. I'd appreciate it if you could tell me why you feel this way about it.
9. Do you think it is a good idea to teach children about things like what the Nazis did, or do you think this is not a good idea?
10. Why do you say that?
11. (If "good idea":) Where do you believe children should be taught about things like this? (No predetermined categories; multiple answers permitted.)
12. How well informed would you say you are about Hitler's treatment of the Jews--very well informed, fairly well informed, not very well informed, or poorly informed?
13. As far as you know, did the Nazis treat other people the same way they treated the Jews?

14. (If "yes":) Can you name some other people that the Nazis persecuted like they did the Jews?

(Remaining questions, 15 through 42, are literally or essentially the same as Questions 25 through 52 in Appendix A.)

DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF SAMPLE

	Percent	
	Viewers	Nonviewers
<u>SEX</u>		
Male	47	46
Female	53	54
<u>REGION</u>		
North Atlantic	24	19
South Atlantic	13	17
North Central	33	29
South Central	13	20
Mountain	5	3
Pacific	12	12
<u>AGE</u>		
18-20	10	7
21-29	23	20
30-44	26	30
45-59	25	18
60 and over	14	22
no answer	2	3
<u>INCOME</u>		
Under \$10,000	15	19
\$10,000 - \$15,000	16	17
\$15,000 - \$20,000	18	16
Over \$20,000	33	25
No answer	18	23
<u>HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN</u>		
UNDER 18	55	51

	Percent	
	<u>Viewers</u>	<u>Nonviewers</u>
<u>EDUCATION</u>		
8th Grade or less	6	11
Some high school	14	17
High school graduate	46	43
Some college	15	13
College graduate or beyond	17	13
Technical or vocational training beyond high school	1	1
No answer	1	2
<u>RACE</u>		
White	93	89
Black	3	7
Other	3	1
No answer	1	3
<u>RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE</u>		
Protestant	49	65
Catholic	28	19
Jewish	5	less than 1
Other	7	6
No answer	2	3
<u>POLITICAL PREFERENCE</u>		
Liberal	25	21
Conservative	42	46
"It depends"	21	15
Other	3	1
No answer	9	17

APPENDIX D

A SUMMARY OF DIRECT AUDIENCE RESPONSE TO HOLOCAUST

Holocaust was seen by an estimated 120 million persons in the U.S. between April 16 and 19, 1978--about half of all television viewers during its time slot (Advertising Age, May 1). The audience was second only to that of Roots, which in 1977 had drawn an estimated 130 million.

By the end of May, the National Broadcasting Company had received some 22,000 letters and telephone calls about the programs--a response exceeded only by reactions to Jesus of Nazareth in 1977. In contrast, the American Broadcasting Company, which produced Roots, received only about 3,400 letters and phone calls within six weeks of its airing. While it is true that some Jewish, church and education groups organized mail campaigns endorsing Holocaust, and that there also was a small organized response denouncing the program, this does not adequately explain why a program seen by 10 million more people evoked so much fewer messages. Thus, the vast difference remains a mystery.

According to NBC tallies, the mail response to Holocaust was 87 percent favorable and 13 percent unfavorable. Telephone calls (most of them received during or right after the series) were 75 percent favorable and 25 percent unfavorable. One network official reported that NBC had never before received so many calls about program content. (Most often viewers call to complain because a favorite show is preempted.)

Approving Responses

Of the thousands of favorable letters, many commended NBC for its "courage" in telling, as one writer put it, "the incredible truth in credible terms," or for a "successful presentation" that was "emotionally involving, moving and sufficiently realistic under the circumstances." Some who wrote in this vein were themselves Holocaust survivors.

Many letters from teachers and parents characterized the series in such terms as "educational television in its finest hour." Others pointed out that it "showed what textbooks have failed to cover in the schools." The tenor of many responses is exemplified in the words of an English teacher from Wisconsin: "I was born in the early 50s to a Protestant family in the South, and while I knew certain 'facts' about the Holocaust, I never really understood it as something that happened to real people. This is a shocking admission for an educated woman, I realize, but we were all so isolated in the present, the Nazis have become just stock 'entertainment' figures."

A good many writers declared that "the world needs reminding" of such aberrations in human history and urged NBC to undertake other, similar projects. On the other hand, a sizable number of letter writers tempered their praise of the program with criticism of the interruptions by commercials which, in their view, trivialized the serious theme.

Disapproving Responses

Of those who reacted unfavorably to Holocaust, some condemned, on intellectual and moral grounds, the entire concept of the production--the idea of presenting a catastrophic human tragedy as a "soap opera serial." One such critic accused NBC of "reducing a searing moral issue to a media event." The commercials were regarded as an added sacrilege.

Others, while willing to accept the dramatization on its own terms, objected to certain "distortions." Some felt that Jews were being stereotyped, or that German Jews were stigmatized as stupid. Others criticized the "sanitized" look of the concentration camps and inmates.

Some writers, claiming knowledge of the events depicted, said the scenario turned episodes such as the Warsaw Ghetto uprising into "simplistic inanities." Some Lithuanian Americans asserted that there had never been Lithuanian SS troops such as were depicted in the program; Polish Americans complained that the series failed to stress the suffering of Poles at the hands of the Nazis; Ukrainian Americans scored the suggestion that Ukrainians took pleasure in the murder of Jews or benefitted from it.

About 2 percent of the unfavorable mail (about one-quarter of 1 percent of the total mail) was openly anti-Semitic. Some examples:

"The Holocaust is a fraud. Read Butz."¹

"I am sick and tired of the Jews and their obsessions."

"NBC is part of an international and clandestine plot (stemming from Israel, no doubt) to have all Americans sympathize with and love the Jews."

1. The reference is to The Hoax of the Twentieth Century by Arthur R. Butz (1977).

A Viewer's Guide to **HOLOCAUST**

HOLOCAUST has received the recommendation of the National Education Association.



The following statement is from John Ryor, President, National Education Association:

"HOLOCAUST is an example of television at its best. In an era when educators often criticize television, a series like HOLOCAUST fortunately comes along to illustrate the impact quality television can make as a dramatic vehicle for the nation."

NBC-TV, on four consecutive nights, Sunday, April 16 (8-11 p.m. NYT), Monday-Tuesday, April 17-18 (9-11 p.m. NYT each night), and Wednesday, April 19 (8:30-11 p.m. NYT).

Original screenplay by Gerald Green (THE LAST ANGRY MAN). Herbert Brodtkin, Robert Berger producers. Directed by Marvin Chomsky (who directed six hours of ROOTS). Titus Productions, Inc., is the production company for HOLOCAUST.

HOLOCAUST stars an impressive international cast including Tom Bell, Joseph Bottoms, Tovah Feldshuh, Marius Goring, Rosemary Harris, Anthony Haygarth, Ian Holm, Lee Montague, Michael Moriarty, Deborah Norton, George Rose, Robert Stephens, Meryl Streep, Sam Wanamaker, David Warner, Fritz Weaver and James Woods. It will introduce Blanche Baker.

The nine-and-a-half-hour original drama is the saga of a gentle and compassionate physician and his family, all of whom are, in different ways, buffeted by the Nazi fury and torment that was unleashed upon the Jews and millions of other people. Paralleling the tragedy of this family is the story of an ambitious young German lawyer, who, prodded by his even more ambitious wife, joins the SS and becomes an influential aide to the chief planner of the annihilation of the Jews.

We wish to acknowledge with appreciation
the helpful cooperation of
the American Jewish Committee
in the preparation of this guide.

I. TO THE TEACHER

The Holocaust—the persecution and mass murder of European Jews under Adolf Hitler's German dictatorship (1933-45)—remains an event unique in history. While the Second World War was raging across Europe, huge numbers of men, women and children were methodically segregated, degraded, starved, tortured, forced into slave labor, subjected to cruel pseudoscientific experiments and eventually gassed and cremated in enormous death factories built expressly for the purpose. Carefully researched evidence documents the fact that of the 12 million people slaughtered by the Nazis (exclusive of those killed in actual warfare), over six million were Jews—more than one-third of all Jews in the world.

Other Nazi Victims

Jews were tormented and killed because Nazi theory branded them as an "inferior, subhuman race"; but they were not the only victims of Nazi racism. Slavic peoples also ranked as subhuman in Nazi ideology and suffered enslavement and murder. Czechs and Slovaks were massacred. Over two million Poles were systematically killed, as were several million Soviet prisoners of war. Christian clergy, Masons, Jehovah's Witnesses, trade unionists, Socialists and many other racial, religious or political "enemies of the Third Reich" were also singled out for persecution by the Hitler regime. But only two groups—Gypsies and Jews—were slated for total extinction.

Genocide

Genocide is the name given to a deliberate attempt to exterminate all members of a particular national or racial group *simply because they are members of that group*. Not every war crime or act of oppression, however unjust and horrible it may be, is genocide. But what went on in the Nazi death factories, and what led up to it, was genocide in the truest sense of the term.

About NBC's Film, HOLOCAUST

HOLOCAUST anchors the Nazi years in historical reality and dramatizes this history through the lives of two families in Hitler's "Third Reich." The families are fictitious, *but the events depicted really happened*. It is important to stress

this point, because young viewers—and even adults—are not always clear about what is fact and what is fiction on TV.



II. HOW COULD IT HAPPEN?

Religious Anti-Semitism

In the spring of 1945, three trucks loaded with eight to nine tons of human ashes, from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, were dumped into a canal in order to conceal the high rate of Jewish executions. When a German general was asked at Nuremberg how such things could happen, he replied: "I am of the opinion that when for years, for decades, the doctrine is preached that Jews are not even human, such an outcome is inevitable"...The doctrine which made such deeds inevitable had been preached, not merely for years or for decades, but for many centuries...The German crime of genocide has its logical roots in the mediaeval theory that the Jews were outcasts, condemned by God to a life of perpetual servitude.

—Malcolm Hay, "Thy Brother's Blood"

Anti-Semitism, meaning hatred or persecution of Jews, is an ancient evil. While it has figured in politics, economics and other areas of life, its oldest and most persistent root has been religious: the charge that Jews as a group are "Christ-killers," living under a curse and doomed to punishment in each succeeding generation. For many centuries, this idea was a staple of church teaching and policy; not until the 1960s did churches repudiate it and condemn anti-Semitism.

Many of the Nazi measures against Jews—excluding them from various occupations and from universities, confining them to ghettos, forcing them to wear identifying badges—harked back to medieval laws designed to degrade and punish the Jews for refusing to convert to Christianity. And religious oppression in earlier

Appendix E (continued)

centuries often turned into bloody persecution despite papal edicts proscribing anti-Jewish violence. Tens of thousands of Jews were slaughtered by the Crusaders on their way to redeem the Holy Land from the Moslems, and similar massacres took place in other places and centuries.

(NBC's HOLOCAUST notes the link between Christian hostility and Nazi anti-Semitism. When one of the Dorf children asks why everyone hates the Jews, the other answers: "Cause they killed Christ. Didn't you learn that in Sunday school?" Heydrich remarks to Dorf: "Christians may disagree on a lot of things, but as men of conscience they can unite on hatred of Jews." In a conversation with Himmler, Dorf says: "The Fuhrer himself said we were completing the work of Christianity, defending Western culture.")

Of course, not all Christians were anti-Semitic. In every century men and women spoke out for the Jews, defended them and tried to protect them. This was true under the Nazis, too.

(Inge, Karl's young Christian wife in the film, is an example of individual Germans who rejected Nazi anti-Semitism and stood up against it.)

At Yad Vashem, in Jerusalem—Israel's international memorial and research center dedicated to the Holocaust—there is a tree-lined "Avenue of the Righteous," in which each tree is a living memorial to a non-Jew known to have saved at least one Jewish life at the risk of his or her own.

German Nationalism

Modern German anti-Semitism was the bastard child of the union of Christian anti-Semitism with German nationalism

—Lucy S. Dawidowicz, "The War Against the Jews"

In 1918, after Germany's defeat in the First World War, the Weimar Republic, a model constitutional democracy, was established; but there was no strong popular commitment to democratic principles. The humiliating peace terms imposed on Germany enraged the German people, and the inflation, poverty and depression that followed the war bred fear, despair and a search for scapegoats.

Capitalizing on this mass discontent, Hitler built his insignificant National Socialist German Workers' Party into a powerful political base. Promising a Greater Germany that would last a

thousand years, he and his followers exalted the Germans as the "master race," and blamed the Jews for all of Germany's troubles. By the time Hitler came to power in 1933, the nation was ripe for his own virulent brand of racist anti-Semitism.

(The opening scenes of HOLOCAUST show how the Nazi philosophy and the growing authoritarianism of the Nazi state affected average Germans. The opportunities for jobs and power made available to young disillusioned Germans by the Nazi government's new institutions are illustrated in Erik Dorf's gradual espousal of the Nazi cause.

The horror of the "Crystal Night" (1938)—the first wholesale physical persecution of Jews—and the ever-growing legal and social isolation of Jews accepted by the German people in the months that followed provide a case history of the average person's potential for evil.)

Racism

Anti-Semitism was given a new pseudo-scientific rationale in 19th-century Europe when race came to be viewed by many as the determining factor in history. German nationalists now proclaimed that the Germans were the only pure "Teutonic race"—the purest form of the "Aryan" race, on which the future of civilization supposedly depended.

Serious scientists gradually abandoned these early race theories, but scientific quacks and portions of the general public clung to the notion of Aryan superiority, giving anti-Semites in Germany and elsewhere an additional weapon against the Jews.

At the same time that the Weimar Republic adopted a constitution guaranteeing German Jews, and all other Germans, political equality, Hitler and his National Socialists were hammering away at the need to rescue Germany from the "subhuman Jewish race." When Hitler came to power in 1933, the race theory became a state dogma, and anti-Semitism became government policy.

(In HOLOCAUST, Heydrich points out to Erik Dorf that although this "racial stuff" might be nonsense, it has its practical side: "Anti-Semitism is the cement that binds us together.")

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How did traditional religious anti-Semitism

pave the way for the German people's acceptance of Hitler's program of mass destruction?

2. How did Germany's past history set the stage for the failure of the Weimar Republic?

3. What new elements did Hitler and the Nazis add to traditional anti-Semitism?

4. How did the theory of "Aryan racial superiority" enable Hitler to persecute minority groups more savagely than anybody before him?

5. Does anyone today still think in terms of "master races"?

6. What did Hitler's police state mean to Germans and others who were not Jews?

III. HOW IT HAPPENED

Mounting Oppression

It began with job dismissals and pressures on Jewish business enterprises. Later (came) forced sales of companies, discriminatory property taxes, blocking of bank deposits, compulsory labor, reduced wages, special income taxes, lowered rations, and confiscation of personal property, pensions and claims.... Later (came) a series of housing restrictions, movement limitations and identification measures. The Jews of Germany now were forced to undergo document stamping, name changes, and the marking of their clothes with a star....

—Raul Hilberg, "Documents of Destruction"

With his rise to power, Hitler began to put into practice the anti-Jewish ideology he had outlined in his book, *Mein Kampf*, as an essential part of his blueprint for conquest. To make Germany *judenrein* (clean of Jews), the Nazis gradually instituted restrictions aimed at making life so intolerable for Jews that they would be forced to emigrate. In a caricature of law-making, they were progressively excluded from holding public office, practicing professions, attending public schools, and eventually even using public parks or transportation. As early as 1935, a set of laws decreed at a party rally in Nuremberg officially declared Jews to be second-class citizens without civil rights. Non-Jews were forbidden to marry Jews, and any close relationships between Jews and others were, in effect, barred.

At first, the Jews of Germany—a community of

over half a million—could not understand what was happening. The ancestors of some of them had come to Germany with the Roman armies, 2,000 years back; their German roots were deep, and most were staunchly patriotic. The horrors of the Middle Ages were long past and Jews had gradually made their way in German society. Anti-Semitism was visible and widespread but it was far less savage than in some other countries. Germany's relapse into barbarism found most Jews disoriented and incredulous.

(HOLOCAUST depicts the patriotism of German Jews in the character of Mr. Palitz, who takes great pride in the medal he won as a soldier in the First World War and identifies strongly with German history, which he considers his own.)

Jews and other opponents of the Nazi regime were brutally mistreated in prisons and concentration camps from the start. By 1938 open violence and public atrocities or acts of degradation had become commonplace throughout Germany; they later became equally common in almost every country that came under German domination. In 1938—the year Hitler seized Austria—the Government staged a supposedly spontaneous nationwide terror action called the "Crystal Night," or night of shattered glass (after the many broken windows of Jewish establishments). Synagogues were burned, Jews were brutalized on the streets, and Jewish-owned businesses and other properties were expropriated under transparent pretexts. Thousands of Jews were thrown into concentration camps, along with religious and other opponents of the regime.

(HOLOCAUST shows how the Nazis conspired to make the "Crystal Night" appear as a spontaneous eruption of popular anger against the Jews.)

Ghettoization and Destruction

At camps maintaining labor installations, like Auschwitz, 10 percent of the arrivals—those who looked fittest—were selected for work. The remainder were...instructed to undress; the women and girls had their hair cut. They were then marched between files of auxiliary police (Ukrainians usually) who hurried them along with whips, sticks, or guns, to the gas chambers... These were identified as shower rooms. The Jews were rammed in, one person per square foot. The gassing lasted from ten to thirty minutes, depending on the facilities and techniques used. In Belzec, according to an eyewitness, it took thirty-two

Appendix E (continued)

minutes and "finally, all were dead," he wrote, "like pillars of basalt, still erect, not having any space to fall."...Later the bodies were burned..."At night the red sky over Auschwitz could be seen for miles."

—Lucy S. Dawidowicz, "The War Against the Jews"

The "final solution"—the plan to annihilate all Jews in Europe—was put into practice in 1941, two years after Hitler's invasion of Poland and the start of the Second World War. German Jewry, alone, might have been dispersed to other lands; but no policy of forced emigration could have worked—even if the frontiers had not been closed by war—for Poland's 3½ million Jews and millions more in the Soviet Union, Lithuania and other Eastern countries.

The original plan was to have the Jews killed by mobile squads that accompanied the German troops on their conquest of Eastern Europe. That was not efficient enough, so "death factories" were set up in a number of camps in Poland to gas Jews wholesale. The monstrous undertaking was kept secret for a long time; only gradually did the story leak out to the intended victims and the free world.

As the German armies moved eastward, the Jews in given towns and regions were segregated in walled-off ghettos, where they were forced to work as slave laborers and systematically starved to reduce their numbers. Jewish Councils (*Judenräte*), appointed by the Nazis, were responsible for governing the ghettos and for everything that went on there. They were also forced to select specified numbers of people to be transported to parts unknown, ostensibly for resettlement. Some councils complied, because they were told that those not sent away would be left undisturbed; others were defiant and became centers of resistance.

Those selected for resettlement—which eventually meant everybody—were shipped away by rail, in box cars. The trains were given the same priority as urgently needed troop trains—an indication of the haste and fanaticism with which the annihilation of Jews was pursued. At the end of the line stood the gas chambers and crematoria of the death camps.

(In HOLOCAUST, these events are given human proportions. We experience the Buchenwald concentration

camp with Karl Weiss. Through the experience of Dr. Weiss and the Lowys we sense the desperation of the deportations and the harrowing decisions to be made.

The horror of Auschwitz is epitomized by Hoess, the camp commandant: "We've got it down to a factory system, but I'm still behind schedule. They undress...we take the valuables...take them to the showers...burn them...bury the ashes.")

The near destruction of European Jewry by Hitler was followed by the founding of the State of Israel in 1948. The Jewish State came into existence in part because the Holocaust survivors challenged the conscience of the postwar world.

(The scene in HOLOCAUST in which Rudi Weiss, at the request of the Jewish Agency representative in Terezin, becomes the leader of 40 Greek orphans headed for illegal immigration into Palestine provides some sense of the exodus of survivors from Europe to Palestine.)

In looking back at the Hitler era, it is clear that concerted action by the world powers could have saved millions of lives. But the Western nations did relatively little to stem the Nazi excesses or to provide a haven for those who tried to flee.

Even when the reports of the death camps had been documented, the Allied powers decided that rescue would have to wait for victory over the Nazis, lest such efforts complicate military plans.

Courageous individuals in many of the occupied countries risked their lives to hide Jewish adults and children or to help them to pass as non-Jews. But these quiet heroes were in the minority. Most of the conquered avoided awareness of what was happening to former friends and neighbors and cooperated with their conquerors—some out of sympathy for the Nazi cause, some for the sake of their own safety. Many actually profited from the misfortunes of the victims by acquiring their property or collecting rewards for betraying them.

(HOLOCAUST shows Father Lichtenberg continuing to pray for the Jews despite Erik Dorf's warnings. But it is made clear that Father Lichtenberg (who was a real person) was one of very few to raise their voices in defense of the victims, and that most people—whatever their walks of life—accepted or blinked at the evils of nazism.)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did German Jews find it so hard to see

what the Nazi rise foreboded? Why did people like Berta Weiss and the Palitzes refuse to leave Germany, even when warned to do so?

2. Why did the majority of the German people fail to protest the "Crystal Night" violence against their Jewish neighbors, and later the murders in the concentration camps?

3. Could a "Crystal Night" have happened in other countries? In the United States?

4. Most Holocaust survivors went to live in what is now Israel or in the United States, but some have returned to their native countries or to Germany. Could you go back to live in those countries after the Holocaust experience?

5. What could the Allied countries have done to help the Jews slated for destruction by Hitler? Were they justified in putting such matters aside until victory was won? Has the world made any progress in providing asylum for refugees since the Hitler era?

6. Edmund Burke said: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." How does the Nazi period illustrate this point? In a showdown, would you protest, like Father Lichtenberg, or look away, like most of his fellow Germans? Why?

7. During his trial in Israel for war crimes, Adolf Eichmann—one of the masterminds of the Holocaust—defended himself by saying he had "only followed orders." The same defense was used by Lt. William Calley in his trial for crimes against Vietnamese civilians at My Lai. Is "following orders" a valid excuse for criminal acts?

IV. RESISTANCE AND ARMED STRUGGLE From Nonviolence to Open Defiance

...When rabbis and other leaders in those days counseled against taking up arms, they did not advocate giving in to the forces of evil; they meant that the struggle should be carried on, as long as possible, by other, life-affirming means. It was a strategy that seemed well-suited to the circumstances in 1940 and 1941, when no one could know how totally different Nazi persecution would be from any sufferings experienced before.

—Yehuda Bauer, "They Chose Life"

Young people confronted with the Holocaust frequently ask: "Why didn't the Jews fight back?"

The answer is that they did fight back. For many years after the Second World War this fact was not well known, because almost the only data available were from German documents, and the Germans, who kept full account of their successes, were far less meticulous in recording any defiance of their supposedly invincible war machine. But more recently, the true story has emerged—chiefly from papers and diaries secretly assembled by Jewish leaders and historians before they were murdered, and from the recollections of those who survived. At Terezin in Czechoslovakia—a camp which the Nazis maintained as a showcase—inmates, including children, left a record of their nightmarish experiences in drawings and paintings.

(In HOLOCAUST, the artist Karl Weiss recorded what he saw, and his drawings were recovered after the war.)

Initially, most Jewish resistance was nonviolent. Its goal was not to destroy the Nazi juggernaut—an obviously impossible task for unarmed and largely unaided resisters—but to preserve the continuity of Jewish life and the Jewish people. The Nazis forbade religious worship and cultural activities in the ghettos; the Jews secretly continued their religious celebrations, held lectures, plays and concerts to lift their spirits, even published illegal newspapers and operated illegal school systems for their children. The Nazis constantly reduced food allowances, cut off medical and social services; the Jews smuggled food and medicine over the walls and, with superhuman effort, kept hospitals and clinics operating.

Such tactics had helped Jews withstand earlier periods of oppression and plunder; and since the Nazis concealed their "final solution" so carefully, the victims did not know for a long time that they faced not merely persecution but annihilation. Not until 1942 did the ghetto dwellers learn that relatives and neighbors taken to be "resettled" were actually going to their deaths. When the truth finally became known, nonviolent resistance was replaced by armed struggle.

By Force of Arms

It is pure myth that the Jews were merely "passive," that they did not resist the Nazis who had decided on their

Appendix E (continued)

destruction. The Jews fought back against their enemies to a degree no other community anywhere in the world would have been capable of doing were it to find itself similarly beleaguered. They fought against hunger and starvation, against epidemic disease, against the deadly Nazi economic blockade. They fought against the German murderers and against the traitors within their own ranks, and they were utterly alone in their fight....In the end it was ruse, deception and cunning beyond anything the world has ever seen, which accomplished what hunger and disease could not achieve. What defeated us, ultimately, was Jewry's indestructible optimism, our eternal faith in the goodness of man—or rather, in the limits of his degradation....And when, finally, we saw how we had been deceived, and...took up arms, we inscribed in the annals of history the unforgettable epic of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

—Alexander Donat, "Jewish Resistance"
(in Albert H. Friedlander, ed., *Out of the Whirlwind*)



The battle of the Warsaw ghetto has become a symbol for heroism before hopeless odds. In April and May 1943, young men and women armed with a handful of guns, grenades and bricks stood off Nazi tanks, guns and mortar for several weeks. They fought from rooftops, stairwells and sewers and from hidden bunkers that dotted the ghetto. And they fought until all of them were dead.

(*HOLOCAUST* portrays how the people in the Warsaw ghetto struggled to give their lives a semblance of normality, and how they finally organized for the rebellion they knew would mean their death.)

Warsaw was not the only case of armed resistance. Some 40 East European ghettos, possibly more, had armed underground units. Some were organized for fighting near home, others for escape and partisan fighting in the deep Polish or Russian forests.

In Western Europe, too—in France, Belgium,

the Netherlands, and Germany itself—Jews joined resistance groups or set up their own resistance units. Even within the electrified barbed wire of the concentration and annihilation camps, Jews fought back. There were prisoner uprisings at Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz and a number of other camps. The Sobibor camp was dismantled by the Germans two days after the rebellion; at Treblinka there was so much destruction that the death factory was not rebuilt.

(In *HOLOCAUST*, the bravery of the resistance fighters is exemplified by Rudi Weiss and by Helena, a Czech Jew, who brings Rudi into the Resistance.)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did few Jews engage in militant resistance during the early days of Nazi rule?
2. Why did the Nazis seek to hide evidence of Jewish defiance? How did the facts about Jewish resistance finally become known?
3. Are people more likely to resist oppression when they have some hope of succeeding, or when they feel their position is hopeless?
4. What made the Jews eventually rebel when they knew it was futile to resist their murderers?
5. How did the position of Jews in the Nazi ghettos compare with that of black slaves in the United States?

V. THE LESSON TO BE LEARNED

First the Nazis came for the Communists; and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. When they came for the trade unionists I didn't speak up, because I wasn't a trade unionist. And when they came for the Catholics I didn't speak up, because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me... And by that time there was no one left to speak for anyone

—Attributed to Pastor Martin Niemöller

If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am for myself alone, who am I? And if not now—when? —Hillel

Not only did the Holocaust leave deep scars on those who perpetrated and condoned the atrocities, and on those who suffered them; it also destroyed the comforting illusion of men and women all over the world that the inhumanities

of the past were safely in the past. Once it had happened, there was no avoiding the realization that it could happen again—to Jews or to some other group.

Neither education nor wealth nor sophistication nor religious affiliation necessarily immunized individuals against the infection of nazism. The Holocaust was not simply the work of lunatics, sadists and criminals; it was planned by intellectuals and professionals and was carried out with the help of civil servants and businessmen, police officers and housewives, as well as military personnel and the entire SS.

(Ernst Biberstein and Paul Blobel, portrayed in HOLOCAUST as heads of mobile killing units, were real persons, whose units murdered thousands of civilians. Biberstein was a Protestant minister, Blobel an architect.)

Such tragedies do not come out of nowhere; and the responsibility for preventing them from happening again lies with all of us.

The testimony of the Hitler years—in documented records and diaries, works of history, novels, dramatizations like HOLOCAUST—can help us understand how the Hitler era happened and strengthen our resolve to guard against the hatred and fanaticism, bigotry and racism that can lead us—can lead any society—down the same grim path. We are—we *must be*—our brothers' keepers.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What do the statements of Martin Niemöller and Hillel tell us about an individual's responsibility to himself and to others in society?
2. Do you think the German people could have prevented the Holocaust if they had refused to go along with Hitler's campaign to destroy the Jews?
3. Do you believe that how you think about other groups and how you behave towards them can affect the way your community and your Government treats its citizens?
4. One characteristic of a totalitarian regime is the brutal elimination of all who might constitute an opposition. Can democracies like the United States do anything to prevent such atrocities in

other parts of the world? Should they?

5. Do you know of any human rights violations now going on in other countries? In this country?

6. What did the philosopher George Santayana mean when he said that "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it?"

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TEACHING ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST

GUIDELINES FOR CHAPTER ACTION

The American Jewish Committee recommends that Holocaust Studies be introduced into intermediate and secondary school curricula. The following pages seek to clarify what constitutes sound teaching about the Holocaust at these levels, and to help AJC chapters—as well as other interested organizations—decide how they will promote such studies.

Rationale

The Holocaust—the systematic persecution and destruction of six million Jews—is little known to, or understood by, persons distant from it in space and time. Until recently it was conspicuously absent from most social-studies texts, and even now it is largely ignored.

Yet to understand the Second World War era, one must be familiar with Hitler's "final solution" and its government-directed genocide against the Jewish people—as well as with the persecution of other "enemies of the Third Reich," such as Freemasons, gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses or homosexuals, and of Catholic and Protestant clergymen who protested these policies. Without an accurate picture of those events in Nazi Germany, there can be no true understanding of the contemporary history of Europe and the United States, or of current events in the Middle East.

In addition, students need to know what prejudice is and how it threatens both victims and oppressors. By encouraging them to clarify their thinking about these issues, we will help them become more responsible citizens and may even help reduce the probability of another Holocaust.

Teaching in Context

Some people are concerned that the subject may be too painful for young minds. Indeed, teaching about the Holocaust entails depicting a great deal of violence. But the events are facts of history that cannot be ignored; taught sensitively, and in the context of world events, they may enhance the values of personal freedom and dignity.

Well-informed teachers can draw parallels with other examples of genocide, such as the Turkish government's campaign to exterminate Turkey's Armenian minority in the first quarter of our century. They can explain what racism and prejudice may lead to—for example, racial oppression in South Africa, racial strife in Biafra and Bangladesh, or, here in America, the massacres of the

Indians, slavery, and the mistreatment of Japanese Americans during the Second World War.

But care must be taken that the violence of the Holocaust does not become just one more example of the "blood and guts" fare so familiar to television viewers. It should be emphasized that such violence, particularly when encouraged and sanctioned by a totalitarian government, dehumanizes the victimizers as well as the victims.

Where school districts have introduced ethnic studies or ethnic heritage programs, the Holocaust should not be isolated as *the* Jewish experience. Rather, stress should be laid on Jewish contributions to Western civilization in such fundamental areas as law, education, ethics, and the fight for freedom everywhere.

General Guidelines

1. Holocaust studies should be integrated with existing courses, particularly (but not exclusively) world history, American history, social studies, or literature. Alternatively, the subject may be set up as a separate elective course.
2. Since textbooks do not as a rule deal satisfactorily with the topic, appropriate supplementary materials should be sought out or developed.
3. Before a Holocaust curriculum is introduced, teachers must be trained in its use. The training should deal with the emotions and sensitivities such materials arouse, as well as with content.
4. Course content and teacher training should be periodically evaluated.
5. When possible, studies to determine what emotional and attitude changes result from teaching about the Holocaust should be incorporated into the program.

Themes for Study

The following themes, currently used in a two-week program in a major city, are an example of how Holocaust studies might be conducted.

Introduction. How can the story of the Holocaust alert people to present and future dangers of racism and genocide?

Theme I. The world that was lost: What was the position of Jews in Europe before the Holocaust?

Theme II. How did the Nazis rise to power in Germany?

Theme III. How did racism and anti-Semitism lead to the debasement of a modern society and to genocidal murder?

Theme IV. How did the Nazis carry out racist policies

and genocidal murder in the European countries they conquered in World War II?

Theme V. How did the victims try to maintain human dignity under a system aimed at their dehumanization and physical destruction?

Theme VI. How did the rest of the world respond to the plight of the victims?

Theme VII. How can the study of the Holocaust contribute to a more humane world?

Intergroup Relations Aspects

Curricula must be sensitive to the needs and feelings of other groups. Holocaust studies should not stigmatize Germans, nor encourage hatred of German Americans or any other group or nation. Rather than dwell on collective guilt, they should help students learn the lessons of history.

Blacks and others point out that they, too, have suffered discrimination and worse, and that textbooks do not do justice to their history. These claims should be recognized as valid and should be dealt with, not by discussing who has suffered most, but by emphasizing that the history and experiences of all groups need to be more accurately portrayed.

Recommendations for Programming

National

The American Jewish Committee will distribute the present guidelines to appropriate national organizations, associations and institutions, such as the Education Commission of the States, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, state departments of education, and textbook publishers and their associations.

The guidelines will also be sent to appropriate professional associations, with the request that the issue be placed on the agenda of their meetings and conferences.

AJC's national office will coordinate chapter activities so that experiences can be shared.

Information and material concerning teacher

training efforts and curricula are to be disseminated on request.

Chapters

If Holocaust studies are to be effective, AJC chapters must be intensely involved at the local level. Each chapter should decide what activities are appropriate in view of its interests, resources and expertise. Whatever the nature of the effort, it will be necessary to work on a cooperative basis with school boards, school administrators, curriculum specialists and teachers, as well as with other citizen groups, Jewish and non-Jewish.

Before doing anything else, chapters should survey their communities to see who is already involved in the various aspects of Holocaust studies: curriculum, teacher training, community involvement and so forth. Such a survey will forestall duplication, will identify gaps that need to be filled, and in this way will enable the chapter to stake out a unique role for itself. For example:

1. Survey teacher training programs, and encourage school districts to have teachers take part. If there are no existing programs, urge that they be developed.
2. Survey textbooks to see how the Holocaust is treated, and report the findings to AJC's national office.
3. Help educators locate and use appropriate supplementary teaching material.
4. Confer with other citizen groups to build support for Holocaust studies.
5. Encourage state departments of education and teacher training institutions to include Holocaust material in curricula.
6. Work with other racial, ethnic and religious groups to encourage more accurate portrayal of their experience in curricula.
7. Meet with textbook publishers in the area to request revision of inadequate texts.

To promote the best possible programming, chapters are urged to report both their successes and their difficulties to the national office, so that their experiences may be shared with other AJCers and interested outside agencies.

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